

REMARKS

Reconsideration and reexamination of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-15, 17,18 have been amended to overcome the rejections under 35USC112 and it is believed that these claims are in condition for allowance

Claim 16 has been rejected under 35USC 102e as eing anticipated by USPN 6,593956. To Potts et al.

16.(previously presented) A method for monitoring a conference of a group of conferees at respective locations around a video camera means having an omnidirectional field of view providing that each conferee is in said field of view of said camera means wherein said camera means has a video signal control for projecting onto a video monitor a selected section of said video signal corresponding to a selected one of said locations;

positioning at each location one of a group of audio detectors;

arranging each said audio detector in operable combination with said camera means to activate said video control to project onto said video monitor an image of said location when one of said conferees generates a sound received by said respective audio detector.

The Applicant's claim 16 is directed toward a method for using a "video camera means having an "omnidirectional field of view". As is understood by one having ordinary skill in the art, and as illustrated by the Applicant's drawings and description in the specification, the

omnidirectional character of the camera presents a field of view that permits positioning of conferees completely around the camera.

In contrast, Potts shows in his specification drawings and discussion of a camera means that permits positioning conferees only in a direct line of sight in front of the camera. There is no way nor suggestion in Potts that the imaging means disclosed in Potts could be arranged to include an "omnidirectional field of view"---i.e., the conferees can be positioned only on one side of the camera.

The MPEP 2186 states

35"USC 112 permits "means or function plus step limitations in claims to combinations ' with the proviso that application of the broad literal language of such claims must be limited to ONLY those means that are equivalent to the means shown in the (Potts) patent specification.

Potts shows ONLY a unidirectional camera, not an omnidirectional camera." A drawing of the Potts unidirectional camera is included for the Examiner's convenience and the method of use including the conferees lined up on one side of the camera.

In contrast, the applicant's drawing (fig. 6) shows the conferees arranged around the conference table with the omnidirectional camera in the center of the table.

As further support in overcoming the rejection of Claim 16 in view of Potts, the Applicant cites:MPEP2131:

Under 35U.S.C.102, the claim is anticipated by the reference, No question of obviousness is present. In other words for anticipation under 35 U.S.C. 102 the reference must teach every aspect of the claimed invention either explicitly or impliedly.

The Applicant characterizes the word location in the preamble as being "locations around a video camera" and then states in the body of the claim "positioning at each location one of a group of audio detectors;"

The reference does NOT disclose the aspect of positioning conferees around the camera either explicitly or impliedly.

It is therefore argued that neither application of the doctrine of equivalents nor satisfaction of the requirements for rejection under 102 support Potts as being a basis for rejecting claim 16 under 35USC 102. Since claim 16 has not been amended by this response, then there is no necessity for further searching that would otherwise be precluded by the final rejection status of the application.

In view of the above, it is believed that the reason for rejecting claim 16 under 35USC 102 has been overcome and claim 16 is in condition for allowance.

Allowance of all remaining claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Samuel Smith

I certify that I have placed this document in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner of Patents and deposited it as Express Mail on 8-30-04

Certificate number, ER084106057 *US*

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AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION